

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claim 16 remains in the application. Claim 16 is subject to examination.

The Examiner has withdrawn the rejection stating that claim 16 is anticipated by Cambou et al.; however now the Examiner has rejected claim 16 under newly cited art.

Under the heading "Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102" on page 2 of the above-identified Office Action, claim 16 has been rejected as being fully anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,400,072 to Izumi et al. under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Applicants respectfully traverse.

The Examiner has referred to the embodiment shown in Figs. 17A, 17B, 12A, and 12B. The Examiner has equated the claimed housing with the lens holder 1 taught by Izumi et al., and has equated the claimed lens unit with the unit formed by the plastic lenses L1-L4, the lens holding cover 114, and the shield case 200 taught by Izumi et al.

Claim 16 defines an optical module in which said lens unit includes a lens holder and said lens holder is supported by said circuit carrier substantially without being supported by said housing.

Contrary to the assertion of the Examiner, none of the embodiments taught by Izumi et al. include the feature of claim 16 that has been copied above. Referring to Fig. 17A of Izumi et al., for example, it is clearly seen that the lens unit, which is formed by the plastic lenses L1-L4, the lens holding cover 114, and the shield case 200, is in fact supported by the housing 1. Note that the lens L4 directly rests on the upper flat portion 212 of an inwardly projecting portion 116 of the holder 1 and on the upper flat portion of another inwardly projecting portion 121 of the holder 1. Also see column 20, lines 12-18, which states, "An upper flat portion 212 of an inwardly projecting portion 116 of the holder 1 is precisely formed for allowing the lens L4 to be attached with high precision so that its corner which is relatively difficult to work is provided with a concave portion 115 and the accuracy of attaching the lens will be decided by the flat portion 212." The invention as defined by claim 16 is not anticipated by Izumi et al.

Claim 16 also specifies that the housing includes at least sections with a ring-shaped support formed thereon, and that the semiconductor element is disposed in the housing. Izumi et al., however, do not teach such features.

Figs. 16B1-16B5 of Izumi et al. show that the solid-state image pickup semiconductor chip 64 is placed on the upper surface of the plastic substrate 249 and the chip 64 is subsequently bonded (Also see column 21, line 54 through column 22, line 41). Applicants note that the chip 64 is not disposed in

the plastic substrate 249, but rather the chip 64 is merely placed on top of the plastic substrate 249. Applicants have thus identified another claimed feature that is not taught by Izumi et al.

Applicants additionally point out that even if the Examiner were to consider the plastic substrate 249 to be a housing, this plastic substrate 249 would not satisfy the limitations of claim 16 that have been copied above because there is not a ring-shaped support formed on the upper surface of the plastic substrate 249. Applicants have thus identified yet another claimed feature that is not taught by Izumi et al.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claim 16. Claim 16 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claim 16 is solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find claim 16 to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

Please charge any fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner Greenberg Stemmer LLP, No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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MPW:cgm

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